

Where Learning is the Constant and Time is the Variable: The Performance-Based Classroom

We don't live in a D minus society, so why is a D minus acceptable in the classroom? Imagine a classroom where students advance, not by age, but rather as each student demonstrates authentic proficiency toward 21st Century learning goals. Using the Common Core and a unique approach to student-centered learning, the Bridger Alternative Program in Bozeman, MT has begun implementation of a true performance-based model of education. The program's American Studies teachers will present the premise behind the model, the research that supports the philosophy, and the tools used in implementation.

A performance-based approach allows students to accelerate learning in visible and measurable ways and adapt tasks to real world purposes to ensure their skills meet expectations beyond the classroom. More than a series of lessons, this performance-based approach is a dynamic and systemic change in thinking about learning that gives teachers, students, parents and administrators the ability to adapt education to the expectations of an unknown future.